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It has seven maps and many other illustrations, among them a handsomely engraved portrait of the author.

JOHN SPENCER BASSETT.

*A History of Missouri, from the Earliest Explorations and Settlements until the Admission of the State into the Union.* By LOUIS HOUCK. In three volumes. (Chicago: R. R. Donnelley and Sons Company. 1908. Pp. xviii, 404; viii, 418; x, 380.)

THE appearance of a comprehensive history of Missouri during the provincial and territorial periods will be most welcome to all students of the history of the West. The only important general works in this neglected field, Billon's *Annals of St. Louis*, Scharf's *History of St. Louis*, and Sheppard's *Early History of St. Louis*, are local in character. Mr. Houck brings to his pioneer undertaking unlimited patience and enthusiasm, means to gather material from the very scattered sources, and an intimate personal knowledge of the hitherto neglected southeastern section.

After an opening chapter on boundaries and natural conditions, the history begins with the mound-builders, the early Spanish and French explorations of the Mississippi Valley, the Kaskaskia settlement, and the exploration of the Missouri and the "Mineral District" on the Maramec. Apart from some possible criticism as to proportion, this portion is painstaking and adequate, although the identification of De Soto's line of march in Missouri will hardly be accepted without question.

For the Spanish period, Mr. Houck presents a wealth of new material. Extensive extracts are given in translation from the letters of instructions, reports, etc., of the lieutenant-governors, from the Spanish archives at Seville, and many points are made clear in the tortuous and vacillating policy of the Spaniards. A more detailed discussion of the English attack on Kaskaskia and St. Louis in 1780 and the curious expedition against St. Joseph in 1781 would have been welcome. A later chapter deals with the very elementary form of government under the Spanish. The special studies of the five local centres of settlement, St. Genevieve, St. Louis, New Madrid, St. Charles, and Cape Girardeau are by far the most valuable part of the whole work. The local records, which Mr. Houck himself has done so much to preserve, the extensive land records at Jefferson City, and the numerous collections of private papers in the Missouri Historical Society and in private hands, have all been used with patience and discrimination. The importance of the lead mines and the early settlement of the Southeast, the close connection with Kaskaskia and Vincennes, the full details of General Morgan's unsuccessful colony at New Madrid, the influence of the westward movement of the Americans are but a few of the important contributions, apart from the mass of more local information. With the valuable chapters on social and economic conditions these studies are the first real history of the Spanish period.

The treatment of the territorial period is somewhat briefer and naturally does not contain so much that is absolutely new; one feels that it has less attraction for the writer. Too much space, it would seem, has been given to biographical detail; the Boones Lick settlements certainly do not receive sufficient attention; it is rather surprising that more use has not been made of the files of the *Gazette* at St. Louis, especially for the local history of the Compromise struggle. Still it remains by far the best account as yet of the period. The discussion of social conditions is particularly valuable.

The book has certain faults incident to the lack of special training which the author so frankly confesses in his preface. Although the foot-notes and references are very numerous, the sources of information, especially in biographical details, are not always clear. A list of authorities would add to the value of the whole work and would, probably, have obviated the lack of uniformity in the citing of titles. It should be more clearly indicated that the numerous references to Hunt's Minutes are to the copy in the possession of the Missouri Historical Society, not to the original at Jefferson City. The indefinite references to the collections of this society, however, are unavoidable in the present condition of its invaluable material.

The history is clearly written and despite the mass of factual information is redeemed from dullness by the enthusiasm, and, especially in the later chapters, by the shrewd common-sense of the writer. But unless one is familiar with the unorganized condition of the materials and the lack of preliminary studies, he cannot appreciate the difficulties of the subject, nor how successfully, on the whole, Mr. Houck has surmounted them. He has done a real service to the student of to-day and laid a broad foundation for the future. Mention should be made of the numerous well-executed reproductions of maps and portraits. The index is voluminous and apparently adequate.

JONAS VILES.

*The Repeal of the Missouri Compromise: its Origin and Authorship.*

By P. ORMAN RAY, Ph.D., Professor of History and Political Science, Pennsylvania State College. (Cleveland, Ohio: The Arthur H. Clark Company. 1909. Pp. 315.)

"THE preceding pages have been written in vain", concludes the author of this doctoral dissertation, "if they do not justify the conclusion that the repeal of the Missouri Compromise in 1854 had its real origin in western conditions and particularly in the peculiar political conditions existing in the State of Missouri and that the real originator of the Repeal was David R. Atchison." But surely one may dissent from the latter conclusion without feeling that Dr. Ray has written in vain. The investigation of the Western antecedents of the Kansas-Nebraska Bill was decidedly worth while. If Dr. Ray